

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND." *Cooper.*



CAPTAIN DEVEREUX CONTINUES HIS ATTENTIONS TO CONSTANCE DELAMERE.

1776.

A TALE OF THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE CAPTAIN'S PROGRESS.

DELAMERE had no doubt that the ultimate finding would be in the captain's favour; he thought the prospect of a title and a coronet must weigh with his daughter as it did with himself, and therefore left the business to time and Devereux's wooing abilities. The captain appeared to be of

the same opinion, and now began the siege in due form; his attentions were more marked, his compliments more direct, his visits to the Elms more frequent, and undisguisedly those of a lover.

Who can win the heart that will not be taken? Constance was polite to her father's new friend—ready to sing and play for his entertainment when the squire wished it; she shared his company and converse on all occasions when it was necessary that the daughter of the house should be present; but no

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H

PRICE ONE PENNY.

Spanish maiden, under the eyes of a watchful duenna, could be more coldly circumspect in her conduct towards him. The girl had a good deal of self-command for her years; she did not see his love-making glances; she did not hear his tender insinuations; sighs and languishing looks were fairly lost upon her, and she contrived never to be for three minutes alone with Captain Devereux.

"Where there's a will there's a way," says the proverb, and the reverse is equally true with ladies of all ages—where there is not a will there is not a way, nor any possibility of making one, as the nephew of Lord Lavenham found. It was in the father's good graces he advanced, not in those of the daughter.

Older in constitution and in habits than he was in years, Devereux was a more suitable companion for the squire than for his young heiress. He had lost the dexterity of youth in the witching arts of love, if he ever had the like; and whatever the captain's experience might have been, it was not in courting ladies hard to woo and win. His ill-success appeared to drive him to his wits' end at times, though either pride or policy prevented him from owning it. Delamere was surprised and occasionally annoyed at it too, and that troubled poor Constance. But it was not the only cause of trouble which the captain's wooing brought to the household of the Elms.

The work in which Devereux was engaged was obnoxious to the whole country, and more especially to the dwellers on the Green Mountains. Fort Frederick had been serviceable in its day, but that was with the past. The land had rest from her ancient enemies now, and the only purpose of its rebuilding must be to overawe and curb the popular discontent with government measures. The most judicious officer would have found it a difficult affair to manage, but Lord Lavenham's nephew was the right man to make bad worse. He began by giving himself airs of superiority, as a high-born man from the old country and an officer in his Majesty's service—the readiest way to offend the independent New Englanders. He proceeded to spread verbal manifestoes against Whigs, Liberty Men, and Green Mountain Boys, generally winding up with what he intended when the fortress was rebuilt and himself in command of the garrison.

The consequences were such as might have been expected; the country people set their faces against him and his company. Not one of them could find quarters in farm-house or cottage, but had to build shanties and cabins for themselves; no native mechanic or labourer would lend a hand to their work for any wages; no farmer would lend wagon, horse, or ox to bring building materials for any price. When they attempted to purchase provisions in farm-house or dairy, the men ordered them out of the premises, while the sturdy women armed themselves with fire-irons, kitchen utensils, and the like, and chased them for their lives.

Instead of being warned by these experiences of the mountain people's metal, Devereux exerted himself to make reprisals. He applied for warrants against the women who had chased his men, but the latter could not or would not identify their fair assailants for fear of being laughed at; and the country justices advised him to let the Green Mountain ladies alone, for their hands and their tongues were equally ready.

He made forays on the farms to impress wagons

and animals for his Majesty's service, and paid for them afterwards at government prices; but somehow the owners got timely intimation, the wagons were not to be found at all; boys mounted on the bare backs of horses were seen driving others before them at a pace which left men unaccustomed to the wild country utterly at fault. The oxen were said to be grazing in the woodland pastures; some of the proprietors offered Captain Devereux a rope-noose to go and catch them, at the same time remarking that their oxen were all of the buffalo breed, and "uncommon spry with their horns at strangers;" and finally, one sturdy farmer gathered a few of his neighbours, informed the captain that he had no authority to seize horse or wagon there, and commanded him to quit his farm directly. Devereux talked of using fire-arms, but neither officers nor men of his company cared to come into collision with the hardy inhabitants of the Green Mountains—accustomed to hunt the bear and bison, and crack shots every man—so the captain had to beat an ignominious retreat, talking of the Mutiny Act and court-martial all the way. The boys hooted him as he passed, and he threatened to arrest and punish them, but one of their fathers sent him word that he had a cowhide ready for his Majesty's officer in case a finger was laid on his child. He brought mechanics and labourers from the distant towns, but his peremptory, overbearing manner so disgusted them that they deserted the work and made common cause with the country people. Fortress building under such circumstances was simply impossible; indeed, the little that was done shared the fortunes of Penelope's web, for the Green Mountain Boys destroyed over-night all that had been accomplished in the day. When sentinels were placed to watch against those destructives, they either got frightened or took the opportunity to desert, and could never be caught again. Finally, the service was found so wearisome and useless that desertion became a common case, and very few of the company remained, except the disheartened and discontented officers.

Captain Devereux had enhanced his own defeat and incurred the general hatred, but unfortunately the odium did not fall on him alone. Squire Delamere's political principles had always been unpopular with his neighbours, and now the squire became unpopular also. He had quarrelled with Squire Archdale, his best friend, and the friend of liberty too. He had associated himself and his family with the unscrupulous instrument of an oppressive government. It was no secret that he meant to bestow his heiress, and the large estate she would inherit from him, on the detested stranger on account of his high birth and connections in the old country, though she had been sought in vain by Sydney Archdale, her equal in every respect, and now regarded as a banished patriot. There was scarcely a man on the banks of the Connecticut who did not consider himself called upon to resent such open opposition to his country's cause, and the ladies unanimously included in the proscription poor innocent Constance, who dreamt of Sydney Archdale every night, and would have given a cheap bargain of the captain to any bidder.

Did they not see her flaunting in brocade and lace when all the respectable women of the land were clad in homespun and busying themselves spinning flax and wool to assist their family's wardrobe?

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There was nothing in that girl's head but pride and vanity; she would marry anybody to be called "my lady," and some of the advanced spinsters predicted that she would come to no good, and be seen in her true colours yet.

They little knew how trying it was for her to see old and once friendly neighbours frown on her father and herself as they passed by, or not recognise their existence at all. How hard it was to find old acquaintances, to whose family festivities they used to ride so merrily through the summer evening, or the clear, cold winter night, and who came in the same fashion to the Elms, refusing her father's invitations, some in reproachful terms, and some with cold excuses.

In hot Virginia or the Carolinas, a few duels would have been the natural result, but the Puritan spirit which still prevailed in New England forbade "affairs of honour" as infractions of the sixth Commandment; so things took a quieter and more persistent course.

Delamere had considerable pride and greater obstinacy; moreover, the converse of Lord Lavenham's nephew had blown up his Toryism to a perfect blaze. He took no notice of the general indignation, except to defy it, and show the Whiggish neighbourhood that it could not frighten him.

He rode out ostentatiously with the captain, and insisted on his daughter riding too, in all the pomp of British fashion, with liveried servants behind the party. When some serious old friends attempted to argue the point with him, he retorted with charges of sedition and treason on them and the whole country. When the minister of the old meeting-house in Hadley prayed that George III and his counsellors might be brought to repent, and turn from their unjust dealings with the American provinces, the squire rose from the pew which his great-grandfather had erected, caught Constance by the arm, and hurried out, exclaiming that he would not hear rebellion encouraged in the house of the Lord.

Probably no other man could have proceeded to such lengths with equal impunity; but Delamere's charities to the poor, and kindly doings to people of all classes, were not to be forgotten, and the comments on his conduct at many a fireside were wound up rather in sorrow than in anger.

His relations, who were all of his own principles, but moderate and prudent men, remonstrated with him, some by word and some by letter from the distant provinces where they were settled, but all in vain. The squire of the Elms had reached that point of wrong-headedness from which he was not to

be moved; it was a liability of his mental constitution, and made him impatient with even the gentle expostulations of his loving daughter. "Dear father," she would say at times, when venturing to advise him against some contemplated exhibition of his loyalty, "these doings will make the whole country your enemies."

"What, Constance," Delamere would cry, "are you a soldier's daughter and afraid of a pack of bragging Whigs? They will all be quiet enough when the king's troops arrive in Boston Harbour, ay, and glad to dance at your wedding the day you become Mrs. Captain Devereux and soon to become my Lady Lavenham, I hope."

"I wish we had never seen Captain Devereux," said poor Constance one day when a sudden fit of sincerity overcame her habitual deference to her father.

"Now, girl, you will make me angry with you! What possible objection can you have to the captain?—a perfect gentleman by birth and breeding—a distinguished officer, or he would not be appointed to such an important charge as the rebuilding of Fort Frederick—and so devotedly attached to you! I must say, Constance, your perverse ingratitude perfectly surprises me!" said the squire. "You will not meet with such a lover every day. He can scarcely look at anything else when you are present. What is your opinion, Hannah?"—Mrs. Armstrong happened to enter the room at that moment—"Did you ever see a man caught, brought into bondage, enslaved, I may say, by any woman, as Captain Devereux is by my girl here?"

"Friend," said the Quakeress, "I am no judge of that matter, having left the days of courtship far behind me; but I know that the same Devereux is a stranger to thee, for he was not brought up in thy neighbourhood, and thou knowest nothing of his bygone years, or in what manner they have been spent. I also know that his coming to this land, and especially to this house, hath brought much confusion and little comfort. I have a great concern on my mind regarding the same, but I have laid it before the Lord. Do thou likewise, friend Delamere, and, casting away all thine own conceits and devices, seek His direction how to deal with this man whom thou hast not proved."

Delamere made no reply; he did not relish Hannah's exhortation, though he could not dispute its wisdom and piety; but had the squire been invested with the wizard's invisible-making mantle, and stationed at a corner of the log hut occupied by Lieutenant Gray, some days after, he would have heard his own son-in-law elect more fully discussed.

A TRIP TO PALMYRA AND THE DESERT.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM WRIGHT, B.A., OF DAMASCUS.

II.

WE now (May 28th, 1874) sent our baggage animals and all impedimenta to Karyetein by the direct route, while we turned out of the way with a slender escort to visit the wonderful hot baths on a distant mountain. We rode the first hour through high-walled gardens and flat fields to Hawarin, a city famed in local tradition for its seven splendid churches. We were taken by surprise by the extent

of the ruins of this place, and we had not allowed ourselves time to explore it as thoroughly as its importance deserved. I saw three large buildings, and the foundation of a fourth, called churches by the people. The largest and most perfect of these was a rectangular building, thirty paces long by twenty-five broad, and thirty feet high. The internal arrangements of the building consisted of a central

hall, and three rooms on each side opening into the hall. The stones in the walls were large, but they seemed to have been rifled from other structures. From the numerous foundations of houses, many of them of massive public buildings, there can be no doubt that Hawarin marks the site of an important city, but the fragmentary Greek inscriptions which I found in my hurried search gave no key to the name of the place.

From Hawarin we rode across a flat plain four hours to Gunthur. All the district showed signs of ancient cultivation, and were the people protected from the Bedawin and the Turks, the flats would once more wave with golden grain. Little patches were cultivated here and there, but not of sufficient importance to tempt the hereditary robbers. Water, the great desideratum for cultivation, was abundant, though all the fountains and channels were choked up. At the water we found straggling flocks of pin-tailed grouse; and throughout the desert, wherever we found water, we found grouse and snipe.

At Gunthur we found, as usual, a few wretched huts on the site of an important town. The houses are cone-topped, and at a distance look like corn-stacks in a farm-yard, but the illusion is dispelled when one enters the square, which is full of dung, in which a dozen of naked children and a score of mangy dogs are disporting. The huts were built round a court so as to form a rampart against the Bedawin, but there were breaches which left the place unprotected, and about twelve days after we passed, the Giath and 'Amour Bedawin came through the place, and swept it clean of the results of the late harvest. At one corner of the court there is the foundation of a very solid temple, twenty paces by fourteen, with two or three courses of the huge stones still in their places. Another larger, more ornate, and more modern structure lies in ruins in the field a few hundred yards to the north-east. The peasants who were gathering in their grain told us that the flats about the village were often covered with water during the winter, and that the place was much frequented by geese, bustards, and wild boar. Grouse swarmed about the water, and there were some spur-winged plover in a meadow.

From Gunthur we started for Solomon's Baths, which we saw on the mountain, under the guidance of a kindly old African, who had lived long in that neighbourhood a slave under many masters, and who was full of the traditions of the baths, and of Lady Belkis, the wife of Solomon, for whom the baths were erected. In five minutes we passed a fine spring slightly tepid and sulphurous. In half-an-hour we reached the base of a low mountain, and after ascending this mountain diagonally for about half-an-hour, we came to considerable ruins on its eastern summit. The only inhabitants of the ruins were a fox, a hare, and a covey of partridges. The exact position of the place, which is called "Abu Rebah," is due north of Karyetein, a distance of three and a quarter hours, or about ten miles as the crow flies. Having made a general tour of the neighbourhood in quest of partridges, our guide conducted us to the wonderful bath. He first pointed out to us, in the roof of a vault, an opening about a foot in diameter, the edges of which were soot-stained, and through which issued a hot vapour. Descending from the roof, which was on a level with the foundations about, we passed through a low entrance into an arched vault eight or ten feet

square. The walls and roof of the vault were scribbled over with Greek by the Browns, Joneses, and Robinsons of two thousand years ago. The literature was of the same serious character as that seen in many of the railway and other waiting-rooms at home. From this outer vault there was an opening twenty inches high into another similar vault, and through the opening there came hot puffs of sulphurous vapour. I crept through this hole, but I was instantly driven back by the intense heat. My servant then rushed in boldly, but he rushed out quite as quick, almost suffocated, and covered with perspiration from head to foot. After this we explored more cautiously the inner vault. In the centre of the floor there was an opening about the same size, and exactly under that we saw in the roof. Steam came hissing from the hole as from the funnel of a ship, and we could hear a hissing and gurgling sound under the vault, as from water boiling over into the fire out of a great cauldron. We threw stones into the furnace, and heard them descending to a great depth; but a piece of paper thrown in was instantly shot out by the current of the vapour. Previous to our visit, Omer Bey, a Hungarian officer, had let down a brazen vessel into the orifice by a rope, but the vessel was snatched from the rope by the *Jann* left by King Solomon to keep the water boiling. Our faithful guide lost his good opinion of us when we suggested that perhaps the fire had burned it off. Indeed, he ever afterwards looked upon us with that suspicion which is the reward of all who are foolish enough to think differently from their neighbours.

West of the bath, in the ravine, there is a large reservoir, the roof of which is supported on five rows of arches resting on buttresses of solid masonry. All traces of water are gone, but the cement on the walls remains white and firm, and is scrawled over with thousands of hieroglyphics, which are doubtless the *wasm*, or tribe-marks, of the Bedawin.

Judging from the foundations of the ruins, the houses appear to have been very small, and they were doubtless used as lodging-houses for invalids and others visiting the baths, for the only attraction to such a barren knoll was its heated vapour. This bath must have been once an important *sanitarium*, and it has still a very high reputation for its healing powers. It is still considered infallible in rheumatic complaints and in the case of barrenness, and is much resorted to in the present day. Men are said to be carried to the bath confirmed invalids, and after spending a night in the vault, return home on their own feet.

In descending the mountain from the bath we started several very small whitish hares, and saw many holes of foxes and jackals. The ground was strewn with rock crystals, which glanced like diamonds in the sunlight. A low range of hills screened Karyetein from our view, but we steered our course by a peak which we knew was in a line with the village. In the bright atmosphere the distance seemed as nothing, yet it was a most weary ride across a level plain, which was all seamed with footpaths, some of which may have been trod by Abraham and his emigrants. We passed several abandoned Bedawy encampments, but we saw no living thing in a ride of over three hours, except a few hares and bustards, and an occasional eagle hastening overhead to its prey. On reaching Karyetein, however, we learned that we must have passed

under the very noses of the plundering Bedawin who were hovering about our path in the mountains. My teacher, whom I had sent on with the baggage in the morning, had announced our approach in Karyetein, and a most cordial welcome was given us. The civil and military chiefs of the place turned out in their best to do us honour, and the people were profuse in their thanks for the school which we were going to establish among them.

The supposition that Karyetein is the Hazar-enan of Scripture (Numbers xxxiv. 9, 10) is probably correct, but the identification of the place with the Greek town Koradaea is a mistake. Two Greek inscriptions (one on a long stone now over the gateway of a Moslem house, and the other on the pedestal of a column in the sheikh's court) give the name of the place as Nazala. The discovery of this name gave rise to a fresh examination of the Peutinger Itinerary, when it was found that the name reprinted "Nehala" was "Nazala" in the original. The name "Karyetein" is dual, and simply means "two towns," and one can see both the old and the new town. About a mile south-west of the present town, near the foot of a low mountain, there is a splendid fountain called "Ras el 'Ain." Around this fountain was built the old town, Hazar-enan ("the enclosure of fountains"). Close by the fountain—or fountains, for there are a number of them—there is a large artificial mound on which are the massive foundations of a temple. The building was twenty-one paces long and sixteen broad, and some of the stones of the foundation were eight feet long. On one of the largest stones there is a well-cut trident. A short distance north-east of the mound there is the base of a square building about forty-eight paces each way. The lower story of this building was vaulted, and the stones remain in their places, as they were too heavy to be removed to the new town, which is chiefly built of mud. It is not improbable that the inhabitants of the Fountain Village moved to a distance from the fountain to enjoy a quiet life, such fountains being the scene of constant strife. At the fountain were flocks of grouse and a few snipe, and I got a very small bittern, which, through the zeal of my companion, is now in the museum of the Protestant Syrian College, Beyrout, and may prove to be a new specimen. The ground was full of pottery, and, among other relics of antiquity, I picked up on the Tell two fine flint knives. We need not, however, rush into theories about the stone, bronze, and iron ages, for a famous sheikh of the Bedawin, to whom I showed my treasures, assured me that such knives were still used by his people.

Karyetein contains about three hundred houses, and one-fifth of the inhabitants are Christians, chiefly Syrian Jacobites. The schoolmaster, for whom all had been petitioning and importuning, had arrived, and only one man in the place (the Christian priest) opposed the opening of the school. As in all places where a missionary opens a school in Syria he opens at least two, sometimes all the sects open schools in self-defence. The opposing priest, under pressure of circumstances, opened a school himself, but as the work was not quite in his line, besides being hard, our teacher had all the pupils to himself in a few days, and Moslems and Christians learned to read the story of Christ's love and passion sitting side by side. We hope also to induce the Bedawin to send their children to this school in the centre of the

desert, but several blood feuds have first to be settled before such a thing is possible.

The people of Karyetein are a fine-looking race of men—especially the princelings of the ruling family. They hunt and hawk, and are as good horsemen as the Bedawin, and better shots. They resemble the Bedawin, but have much more bone and sinew. Their independence has been developed thoroughly by resisting the encroachments of the Turks and the Bedawin, but of late a Turkish garrison has been placed among them, and their acquiescence has been secured by giving them appointments of command and trust.

The civil and military chiefs are very great people in Karyetein, and we had to attend carefully to all the punctillios of receiving and returning visits. Long negotiations in the matter of guide and guards had to be conducted with as much diplomacy as might have sufficed for the cession of a duchy. It was at last arranged that we were to have an equal number of civil and military guards—that is, regular soldiers and irregular mounted police. The guide was a difficult question to decide, for each of the authorities had one to recommend—the only one who knew the path to 'Ain el-Wu'ul—and as it was understood that the *protégé* was to share his fee with his master, the dragoman was placed in a delicate situation. All things having been arranged, we struck our tents, and started from Karyetein on the 30th of May, at four o'clock in the afternoon. Our object was to break the journey at 'Ain el-Wu'ul ("fountain of the Ibexes"), a reputed fountain in the mountains to the right, half way to Palmyra from Karyetein. The existence of this fountain was kept a secret so that people might employ camels to carry water, as they had to go through at one march, and our innovation was looked upon with great disfavour. Gazawy compromised the matter by taking a few water-carriers at a very high charge. Our cavalcade struck out across the river at the mill, wobbled about through ploughed fields, and at last turned Palmyra-ward into the desert.

We had now assumed the dimensions and character of an invading army. We were not stealing through the desert under cover of the darkness, but forcing our way where we pleased, and at our leisure. "Brandy Bob," a captain in the infantry, was commander-in-chief of our military escort. He rode a vicious mule, with only a halter, and without stirrups, carried a single-barreled fowling-piece, about eight feet long, and a bottle of brandy in each pocket, *à la Gilpin*. He had a habit of lighting abruptly, but that may have been the mule's fault, or the brandy's. His soldiers were all mounted in the same unceremonious manner as himself. Our irregular police were a very irregular set indeed. Nominally in government service, they are ready to take a turn at throat-cutting for anybody who may employ them, and they are the free lance or government banditti of the desert. If there is a prospect of plunder they will join a Bedawy raid, and by their arms, such as they are, contribute to the victory. On my first tour to Palmyra my irregular escort robbed every individual we saw in the desert. Remonstrance on my part was of no avail, as they replied that they had only agreed to take me safe to Palmyra, not to abstain from taking anything Allāh placed in their way. On the whole we had such a guard as might have been safely trusted to make short work of any party weaker than themselves.

Faris, our gipsy guide, deserves a passing notice. He was a light, little man, with crimped hair, sallow complexion, coal-black eyes, which were always on one, and a stealthy, silent step, as if he were afraid of waking some one only slightly asleep. He always seemed drawing up his feet from behind, but he never let them get before him, lest they should let out some secret. His mare was of the same gipsy cast, a marled grey; her neck was hollowed down like a camel's where one expected a curve, and her under lip hung down and exposed the teeth, while her nose and upper lip were drawn back, and had a curious huffed appearance. Her legs were bent the wrong way, and her joints were in the wrong place, and she was so lean, and wizened, and dry, that she seemed to go nodding and dozing along without life or feeling. They were an uncanny-looking pair, and I could not look at them without an uneasy feeling.

With "Brandy Bob" and Gipsy at our head we swept along the desert in splendid style. In front were two little mountains, offsets from the range on the right. That to the left was called Khuderiye, and that on the right Bârdy, and we made straight for the opening between them. We passed several gazelle-traps, near Karyetein. Little walls converge to a field from a great distance, increasing in height as they approach the field. The field is walled round, leaving gaps at intervals, outside of which there are deep pits. The gazelles, led on by curiosity and guided by the little walls, march up into the field, and when they are startled, they rush out wildly in a panic at the breaches, and tumble into the pits. Sometimes forty or fifty are taken out of a pit alive at one time.

The desert was tolerably smooth as far as the little mountains, when it became more broken and cut up, chiefly by the action of mountain torrents. The Arabs reported that in the mountain range to the right there were the remains of a great reservoir which once supplied water to Kasr el Hiyar, the half-way station in the direct route between Karyetein and Palmyra. That evening we had the finest sunset I have ever seen in the desert. The western horizon seemed literally in a blaze. Soon the light blue veil of the mountains became tinted with violet and indigo, and finally settled into leaden death, and the wind came up cold as a Siberian winter. We held on our course bravely till midnight, when our column became very unsteady, and began to wriggle about promiscuously over the desert. The cold was intense, and the bottle passed between our leaders more frequently than was consistent with their responsible position, or than was expedient for safe and steady guiding. Suddenly we turned to the right, and marched straight against the mountain, which we had been approaching at an acute angle. We knew the fountain was in the range to the right, but thought it must be at least two hours farther on. Gipsy, however, spurned interference, and assumed all responsibility.

We soon got into a maze of rocks, and after half an hour's scrambling through them and over them, we came right against the precipitous side of the mountain. Gipsy went boldly at the mountain, with few words, when, suddenly, down he came on his head on a heap of stones, and the old horse turned and made a vignette over him. He lay in a bundle, motionless, where he fell, and when I asked him what was the matter, he hiccupped out, "It's a hare," as if he had got off to catch it.

"Brandy Bob's" bottle had done its work, and the guide was hopelessly drunk. Then commenced a scene never to be forgotten. No one knew exactly where we were, or where the well was; but we spread out across the rugged base of the mountain after midnight to look for a well of which we had only heard a report. Our horses staggered over precipices and scrambled out of ravines in the most marvellous manner. Baggage animals followed wildly after the cavaliers, stumbling and rolling over rocks; the whole looked like a steeplechase or a wild stampede, everything magnified by the black shadows; and there was an appalling expenditure of profane language. We explored desperately for about an hour, which seemed an age; but as the moon was hurrying behind the mountain, and as we were only getting more hopelessly lost, we encamped for the night on a bare plateau at the base of the mountain. The cold was as intense as had been the heat of the day; but we were soon in that happy land where the perplexities of the day are forgotten. The night, however, has perplexities as real and as distressing as those of the day while they last, and so I dreamt of stumbling frantically and in imminent danger over precipices, until a little Bedawy girl pulled the door of my tent aside, and the sun, hot as a furnace, shone in upon me.

The little maiden we called the "Princess," and perhaps no princess, except in an eastern tale, ever was the bearer of more joyful news or more acceptable gifts. She announced the lost fountain, and she bore in one hand a brazen vessel full of fresh milk, and with the other she led a snow-white lamb. I remembered how African explorers, when hopelessly exhausted, had been ministered to by savage women, and I sighed for the pen of an African explorer, that I might celebrate this ministering angel of the desert and the fountain. Our little angel was not of the white and shining kind; she was dark olive, and her only garment was a blue calico shirt, close fitting at the neck, and extending far down the leg. A blue fillet wound round the head left the hair free to stand up and enjoy the mountain breeze, and beneath the fillet it fell in uncombed plaits around her shoulders. These plaits were prolonged by bits of strings made of camel's hair down to below the waist. Doubtless a revolution has since taken place in the disposition of Bedawy locks in the desert, for my companion presented the princess with an ivory comb, a work of art which caused in the encampment no little speculation on its use. But we must not be diverted from describing our princess, whose piercing, timid black eyes shone brightly in deep, sooty sockets, and whose feet, which spurned the flint, gave a fine example of what Disraeli calls "the high Syrian instep."

The princess was accompanied by two princes, clothed from head to foot in the skins of the wa'al and gazelle. They seemed like ordinary Bedawin—small, spare, dark men, with deep-set, restless eyes, and noses of the Seymitar type. They belonged, however, to the Suleib Arabs, a unique tribe in the desert. At a remote period this tribe was degraded from exercising the larger prerogatives of Bedawin of the higher aristocracy. They do not make war on the weak, nor rob, except in a pilfering way, nor intermarry with any of the other tribes. Many wild stories relate the causes of their degradation, but that most common among the other Bedawin is, that they ran away from the siege of Kerbela, leaving their

friends to be butchered, "and the curse of Allāh still lies heavy upon them." As a part of their punishment, they were placed on the same footing with women, as unworthy to ride horses, and so they never ride anything but donkeys; but the Suleib donkeys (known as Bagdad donkeys) are the finest in the world, and will bring from twenty to forty pounds in Damascus. These Arabs, unlike the other Ishmaelites of the desert, have their hand against no man, and no man's hand is against them. They live by the chase, and by the milk and wool of their flocks; and when they sell a donkey its price supplies them with all they need from the outer world. On the declivities of 'Ain el wu'al, are still to be found wu'al, or ibexes, which they hunt with great skill. Clothed in the skin of the wa'al, they follow them from rock to rock, on all fours, until they shoot them at short range, and sometimes their disguise is so complete that they even catch the gazelle and wa'al alive with their hands. These Suleib Arabs take no part in forays; as one of them said to me, "Allāh has made enough for us all, and if we plunder one another there will not be enough for us all." They will sit on the ground impartial spectators of a battle, and when the fight is over they will nurse the wounded of both sides, like the Knights of the Geneva Cross. When one tribe is pursuing another they will entertain with equal hospitality both the pursued and pursuer, but nothing can wring from them any information as to the direction the fugitives have taken. These Arabs are to be found about the wells throughout the whole desert, and they are always of the same peaceful and hospitable character.

Our visitors informed us that the fountain was about a mile farther on among the mountains, and so, as soon as we had eaten their offerings, we moved our camp forward to the foot of the ravine below the fountain. We pitched on the site of a military camp where Omer Bey had stationed his soldiers when he wished to reduce the desert to subjection. We should have had no difficulty in finding the fountain. From the pass between the two little mountains we should have followed a beaten path, leading gently to the right to the lowest break in the mountain, about three hours ahead. On our return we rode from the fountain to Karyetein in ten and a half hours, so no one need ever again spend money in water-carriers on the road to Palmyra. We ascended to the fountain through a gorge, the stones in the bottom of which were as slippery as ice. Every tribe that crosses the plain between Palmyra and Karyetein, is obliged to pass up this gorge for water, and through the wear of ages the stones have become so polished that scarcely one of our animals went up to the water without a fall. The stones, however, were so smooth that none were injured by falling.

We found the fountain at the head of the gorge. It is a deep tank about twelve feet square, faced round with rough stones, and the water was about ten feet lower than the surface of the platform in which the tank was sunk, so that it had to be brought up and placed in hollow stones for the animals to drink. The stones about the tank were squared but not chiselled; and though we saw foundations of buildings, we could find no inscription. From between the high shoulders of the gorge we had a good view of the broadest part of the plain, and the Kasr el Hiyar lay exactly north-east of the fountain, about six or eight miles distant. The water in the tank

was very green, but one ceases to be fastidious about the quality of the water in the desert. Two cheerful little maidens were filling skins with the green fluid, and fourteen skins were lying about filled and festering in the sun. A number of camels were squatting at the troughs, waiting for some one to bring them water, and little flocks of goats were pouring over the cliffs and converging to the fountain. The little stagnant pond had attracted a great number of living things. Partridges scolded us from the rocks on every side for interfering with their beverage; and myriads of linnets of all kinds and colours settled on the tall thistles and awaited our departure; and eagles, and vultures, and red-beaked choughs soared over us at every altitude. A little way over from the fountain was the Suleib encampment. It consisted of about a dozen tents, or rather a dozen long pieces of black hair-cloth, fastened down with stones at the side next the wind, and at the other side propped up with bits of sticks and tied down with strings. Beneath the awnings thus formed women squatted, horribly tattooed and filthy looking; and one miserable creature who was sick lay on skins, with a skin filled with water for her pillow. The dirt of the tent was scarcely removed beyond the tent strings, and the odour, at least to us, was far from agreeable. Some of our irregular police were sitting in the tents, feasting on a half-roasted sheep that had been slain for them. We saw none of the famous Suleib donkeys, and we learned with regret that a plague had swept many of them away, and that they had been obliged to sell a great many of them during the Syrian famine. A few black and wretched substitutes stood nodding about the tents. On our return to the fountain from Palmyra we found no trace of the Suleib, but three men were found dying of thirst at the fountain. They had made their way to the place, but were too weak to reach the water.

I was especially interested in the Suleib Arabs, as I thought they would not be afraid to send their children to one of our schools, in a border village, such as Karyetein, and I thought that, as they had no blood feuds or enemies among the Bedawin, they might be employed to carry instruction and the light of the gospel to the other wanderers of the desert. They, however, strongly objected to their children quitting the ways of their fathers; and I found, on consulting a Bedawy chief, that the blue-blooded Bedawin held the Suleib in such contempt that they would not on any account allow their children to be taught by them. "We would let our children learn from Nasara (Christians), or Jews even, but that they should be taught by these low-souled, womanish Bedawin—ask forgiveness from God for such a thought!"

DUCK ISLAND, ST. JAMES'S PARK.

WHAT would the ornamental waters in our public parks be without the ducks and Duck Island! The scene from the shore across to Duck Island, that shaded sanctuary of maternal cares and pleasures, whence flocks of mouse-coloured cygnets and yellow ducklings launch forth in summer-time for a cruise, is one which never satiates the eye. Tall reeds and rushes fringe the margin, but there are not wanting easy landing-places for the web-footed

creatures to whom walking is difficult. Drooping willows, with long, narrow leaves, screen the spot from the garish world; and here and there clumps of the beautiful pampas-grass and giant cow-parsnip vary the vegetation. In its dim recesses is a jungle of grasses, rushes, and twiggy shrubs; and here, at midday and at night, the ducks find a safe retreat, until returning children, with biscuits and cakes, lure them again to the mainland shore.

But what are these so-called ducks, these numerous and widely-differing water-fowl, most of which are quite strange to us? Some have very gorgeous colours, some have a crest on their heads, and some utter most uncouth cries. How came they here? for most of them are unknown to us off the park waters, although we might perchance find some stuffed and mounted specimens in the British Museum. Whose are they? and have they a keeper? Do they live here all the year, or are they simply summer sojourners? Such are some of the questions which suggest themselves to a visitor to St. James's Park, looking over to Duck Island at a little squadron which has just set sail from beneath the pendulous willows, and is leaving an arrow-shaped track behind.

Let us first see what the "ducks" really are, and then learn where they come from. Surely there must be an interesting history of so varied an outdoor menagerie as this.

The water-fowl of St. James's Park, which are a more varied collection than those found in the ornamental waters of our public parks generally, are an assemblage of swans, geese, and true ducks, from regions ranging from the Arctic to the intertropical zones and the southern hemisphere. If we follow these birds to their native homes, we shall find that they bring into St. James's Park all the romantic interest of wild regions known to most of us only through books of travel and adventure. Many of them range from Northern Asia, Iceland, and Labrador, to the Bahama Islands, North Africa, and the China and Indian Seas. Birds from Kamtschatka and Australia are before us, some transporting us in imagination to the great marshes of the northern hemisphere, the fur countries, and the isles of the Arctic Sea: others take us to the vast muddy flats of African rivers and lakes, where storks and pelicans abound. Here, too, are our more familiar British wild-fowl, from the Hebrides southwards to the flats and broads of our coasts and inland waters. The marine ducks and the fresh-water ducks are alike before us on these St. James's Park waters, to rejoice our eyes and awaken our minds to scenes of Nature which most of us will perhaps never look upon.

Sailing placidly across from Duck Island to a group of children with biscuits comes the black swan, the *rara avis* of antiquity. The black swan has become acclimatised in England, and annually rears her brood of cygnets. Watch the bird, and you will agree that if it is smaller than our native white swan, it is not a whit less graceful. Our white swan is a bird of high latitudes and is found in the Polar seas. We can hardly have watched either the black or white species in the parks without noticing the remarkable power they have of submerging the head beneath the water for a considerable time in search of food at the bottom.

The Chinese goose is another strange bird in the parks, which at once arrests attention. It has a

curious projection on the higher part of the orange coloured beak, which looks at first sight like a mal formation. Everybody asks the name of this bird with the curious beak-profile, but as the water-fowl are not labelled, like the trees and shrubs around us, the answer is not so easily got. But for this odd-looking beak the Chinese goose might almost be mistaken for its British relative, as it has perfectly white plumage.

A couple of Egyptian geese are also here on the grassy banks, bringing other scenes before our mind's eye, such as Sir Samuel Baker has recently familiarised us with in his pictures of the country of the hippopotamus. They are large birds, with oval-shaped bodies and handsome mottled brown plumage, the upper part of a rich reddish brown, and the cheeks reddish white. They are great favourites with the visitors.

Another far-travelling species now comes upon the scene. This is the white-fronted goose, abundant in Lapland and the Arctic Sea. Here we look upon the companion of the Esquimaux, the white Polar bear, and the blue Arctic fox. Let us note well so interesting a guest that we may know him again. The white forehead, surrounded by a dusky band, the pink bill and orange legs, the upper plumage mostly ash-brown, and the under plumage in front brownish white with patches and bars of black, are some of this bird's general characteristics. Our domestic goose is said to be derived from this white-fronted species.

Still they come, labouring up the crumb-strewn slope, these interesting members of our feathered migrants. Within a few yards of us we see the very beautiful Bernicle goose, common in the western islands of Scotland and the White Sea. The Brent goose (a decidedly marine bird), which retires to the Arctic regions at the breeding season, and is at other seasons the most abundant of all the geese which frequent our shores; and the Bean goose, with orange bill and legs, next to the Brent the commonest of all our wild geese, and far more numerous in Scotland than in England. On these same waters, too, we shall find a pair of brown Chinese geese.

All these geese, the Arctic and the British alike, with the exception of the Brent, breed on Duck Island, St. James's Park.

What vast and various tracts of sea and land these migratory species look down upon as they speed along from high to lower latitudes, cleaving the air in wedge-like array, at the rate of fifty and sixty miles an hour; what lakes, rivers, cities, and hamlets; what wilds and cultivated lands; at one season rejoicing the inhabitants of the frigid zones with the signs of returning summer; at another revisiting the temperate climes of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America! What journeys by night, too, as well as by day, apparently without any beacon to guide them!

The geese, we observe—and the fact may be noticed on any village common as well as in the parks—spend most of their time out of the water. Unlike the ducks, they are terrestrial rather than aquatic birds. Their food is chiefly grass. They walk more readily on land than the ducks, having the legs placed more centrally under the body.

The park ducks are no less interesting as strangers and migrants than the park geese. They are not all strangers to us; some of them are mixed breeds of

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DUCK LIFE.



the common species. But most of them are pure breeds—British migrants and imported “foreigners.” There is an extraordinary variety of these rarer water-fowl in St. James's Park, and their plumage is delightful to look upon.

First there are the British migrant ducks. Let us give these the preference before noticing the exotic species.

The Pintail Duck.—This, which is in form the most elegant of all the ducks—carrying its head and neck like the swan—visits nearly all parts of the northern hemisphere. It visits British shores in severe winters. It is common in Lapland.

The Gadwall, or Grey Duck.—This rare species breeds in the great northern marshes of both hemispheres. It is met with in Siberia, India, Persia, North Africa, and through the United States to South Carolina.

The Sheldrake, or Burrow Duck.—The largest and handsomest of the British ducks, but, being a marine bird, difficult to domesticate on inland waters. It often makes its nest in rabbit burrows, or in a hole made by itself. The St. James's Park specimens breed on the Duck Island.

The ruddy sheldrake has its head and neck clothed with buff plumage, passing into orange-brown. The general plumage is of a rusty yellow. It is better known in Asia and the east of Europe than on the western sea-board. It has lived for some years in St. James's Park, but does not breed there.

The sheldrake is placed first in the list of the ducks, because, in many respects, it resembles the geese, especially in the fact that the plumage of the females is almost of the same colour as the males, which is not the case with true ducks.

The Golden-eye Duck.—This pretty, active little duck is a great favourite with visitors to St. James's Park. The male is conspicuous, the tuft of feathers on the head adding greatly to its beauty. It is one of the divers, and its motions are most rapid and interesting. It builds in holes of trees in high latitudes. The Laplanders place boxes, with holes in them, in the trees of the country for the birds to build in, and they thus procure their eggs, the cotes being regularly resorted to for laying in.

The Ferruginous, or Castaneous Duck.—This duck, with dark-brown back and a white bar across the wing, has a wide eastern range, and is a rare winter visitant to the British islands. The observant will notice that it swims with great expertness, dives well, and remains for a long time below the surface. It breeds in St. James's Park.

The Red-crested Whistling Duck.—This very handsome bird is easily singled out from the bevy on the park waters. It has a wide range, being found in various parts of Asia, Italy, and Africa. It is an occasional visitor to Britain in winter.

The Tufted Duck.—Another conspicuous species, with dependent crest (more noticeable in the male than the female) of very narrow black feathers and bill of deep bluish lead-colour. It is another of the northern species, and a regular winter visitor to our lakes and sea-coast. It is one of the prettiest of the diving ducks, and has made itself quite at home in St. James's Park, breeding on Duck Island.

The Shoveller Duck.—This bird is rarely seen at sea, and may be regarded as a fresh-water species. It is met with in the eastern and other parts of England, but is nowhere abundant. It has been observed

on the shores of the Mediterranean and in some of the warm parts of India. In Holland it is abundant. It breeds in St. James's Park.

The Widgeon, or Whow Duck.—Flocks of widgeon come to our shores in autumn, and the species are among the best known of the ducks that frequent our shores. The widgeon is widely distributed in the high latitudes of Europe and Asia, and goes northward in the spring to breed, returning in autumn. Its note is a whistling or whewing cry.

The Teal.—This is the smallest among the British ducks. It is a decidedly British species, with a wide northern range. It has two notes, one a kind of quack; the other, uttered only by the male during winter, has been compared to the whistle of the plover. The teal breeds on Duck Island, St. James's Park.

The Pochard, or Dun Bird.—Another bird of wide geographical range, and a well-known winter visitant in the south of Europe. It is a skilful diver, as visitors to the park waters may soon observe for themselves. It rarely breeds in this country, but the St. James's Park colony rear their broods every year.

Such are some of the wide-ranging feathered migrants of the northern hemisphere—from Eastern Asia to Iceland, the Polar Sea, and Labrador on the one hand, to the Mediterranean on the other—which may be seen inhabiting Duck Island, St. James's Park. So instructive a lesson in ornithology as this may well entertain us, and lead us to further observation when we again go to “feed the ducks.” But let us now turn from the European to the exotic water-fowl.

Mandarin ducks from China, the Bahama duck from South Africa, the Summer, or Carolina duck, from the United States, the Buenos Ayres duck, are exotic species which may be seen at St. James's Park. A more magnificently-clothed species than the grand Mandarin, or Chinese teal, especially when the male is in full plumage, is not to be conceived. These birds have the habit of perching, and may be seen at times on the branches of the willows overhanging the lake. The male is gorgeous in purple, green, white, and chestnut; the female is soberly appressed in brown and grey. Between May and August the male throws off his fine crest, wing-fans, and brilliant colours, and assumes a dress as sober as his mate's. The Mandarin seldom breeds in this country, but we believe several broods have been reared in the Zoological Gardens. The Bahama duck has extremely beautiful plumage, and is a great favourite among the exotic water-fowl, but it has not yet domesticated itself on Duck Island to the extent of founding a family there. The Summer, or Carolina duck, a pleasing little creature, takes more readily to strange quarters, and rears a family every year at St. James's Park.

There are between thirty and forty varieties of water-fowl to be seen on the St. James's Park lake. Let us now see how they came there, whose they are, why they stay there, and who looks after them.

This interesting feathered community was founded by the Ornithological Society in the year 1836. The nucleus of the present collection of ducks was gradually established, consisting of captured, imported, and bred specimens. A hard life awaited the new occupants of the park waters, which are now so uniformly appreciated and protected by the visitors. The stranger species, with conspicuous crests, were most unmercifully harried by the rougher frequenters of

the park, and they were actually destroyed in large numbers, being perseveringly pelted with stones by men, women, and children alike. It was some time before the poor birds got favour in the eyes of this class of visitors. Now, however, the infliction of wilful injury is of the rarest occurrence.

It is now some years since the St. James's Park collection was handed over from the Ornithological Society to the custody of the park authorities—the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. The Ornithological Society no longer exists, and the Zoological Society confines itself to importing and breeding rare birds simply for its own collections. Duck Island, St. James's Park, is, however, still in the charge of the keeper who was installed there in the earliest years of the Ornithological Society's efforts to stock the lake. He occupies the little Swiss cottage which was built for him in 1841, when the society began its work of acclimatising the water-fowl in real earnest, constructing steam-hatching apparatus, and feeding-places and decoys on the island.

The duties of the keeper are these. He must see that ample space and nesting materials are provided on Duck Island for the separate family life of birds of distinct habits, and in many cases of decided antipathies to each other. The swans, for instance, require a large space; they are very quarrelsome, and unless there is plenty of covert for the smaller water-fowl, it is impossible to keep and breed them on the same spot. To domesticate strange and valuable species being the main object, the keeper is careful that the vegetation shall afford sedges, grasses, and twigs for nests.

Having made due provision for the breeding season, the keeper's cares begin. In some seasons thousands of eggs are found in the nests of Duck Island. Invading fowl from other waters—sometimes wild moorhen—will suddenly settle down in the island, disturb the sitting birds, and trample on eggs which were the keeper's most special care. Thus the hopes of a whole year are perhaps blighted, and the black swans or Egyptian geese might be cut off in the winter without leaving any lineage behind them.

The art of domesticating the fledgelings soon begins. Old and young alike are regularly fed with grain, and the strongest of all ties is thus formed with the keeper. In due time the new brood are caught and "pinioned," *i.e.*, their wings are cut to prevent their flight from the park, an operation which has to be renewed regularly, in spite of the attractions of daily rations.

In the summer season, when the birds live an entirely out-of-doors life, and are left very much to the mercy of the public, their number is carefully checked each day with the recorded list. The various friends the ducks have formed among the park police and the public speedily lead to the detection of any accident or loss by flight. The hybrids, or mixed breeds, take long flights all over the park, and occasionally are seen flying off to the Serpentine waters in Hyde Park; but these species are but of little value in the eyes of the keeper, and not worth the trouble of pinioning. Singularly enough, all the birds get very wary and suspicious towards dusk, when it is impossible to get near them.

As winter approaches, and the limited resources of Duck Island have to be considered by the keeper, the surplus broods are thinned, and only the neces-

sary stock are received into hospitable quarters. Indeed, during the breeding season, only a small proportion of the eggs have been hatched in excess of present needs. These are found useful in supplying the desiderata on other park waters. When chill October comes the net is spread on the island, and the new broods are driven in. Those which are to be preserved are pinioned afresh. Inasmuch as almost all the birds are of species belonging to high latitudes, the climate of our winter is in itself more congenial to them than our summers; but the limits of their range are probably more severely felt, especially when the water becomes frozen. An additional temptation to flight occurs through the occasional visits of wild birds of the same species, flocks of which will sometimes settle down for a few days in the St. James's Park and Serpentine waters. It can easily be imagined how these wild visitors awaken in the park ducks all the latent instincts of their lineage. But the keeper is careful to keep the ice broken in the parts most frequented by his birds—a most necessary precaution—as well as to feed them with grain (mostly Indian corn) when the island and the waters no longer yield the accustomed supply. So is the colony preserved until spring returns once more.

Such is duck life on Duck Island, St. James's Park. By these means the water-fowl are kept as an ornament to our parks and a delight to the visitors. We have seen now what the so-called ducks are, whence they come, to whom they belong, and the nature of their sojourn with us. How instructive are the lessons in geographical ornithology we may get by going to feed the ducks! How happy, too, the change from the times when our feathered guests were sport for stone-throwing roughs to the times when they are cherished and protected by the visitors! Pleasant is the picture on a summer's evening when the lake is alive with graceful, sportive, and trustful water-fowl; pleasanter still to learn what we can of their native homes—from Arctic seas to Australian shores. Perhaps, in our future visits to the parks, we shall observe more closely the friendly birds which bring, as it were, into our familiar holiday resorts the romantic scenes of distant lands.

H. W.

CONCERNING SHOES AND SHOEMAKERS.

II.

SUCH names as those we have mentioned belong to the order of sacred workers; but shoemakers have their representatives in other departments of letters. One of the chief of these is the mighty but merciless critic, William Gifford, one of the first, and certainly one of the most accomplished, editors of the "Quarterly Review," and the author of the "Baviad" and the "Mæviad." He was born in circumstances as lowly as any of his brother professors of the mysteries of cordwaining, but there came a time—now was he very far advanced in life when it came—when his voice and verdict were imperial in the world of criticism. He was apprenticed to a shoemaker at the age of fifteen; he had but one book in the world—a treatise on algebra; he determined to master its problems, but he had neither paper, pen, ink, slate, nor pencil. Mathematics, however, he was determined to conquer. He sat up night

after night at his studies, and he used to beat out small pieces of leather to a smooth surface, on which he contrived to work his problems. His master was not mathematical; he thought the pursuits of his apprentice were a waste of time and leather; he severely chastised him, and bade him "attend to his cobbling." It is not for this paper to describe how he attained to eminence. His satiric powers, always employed on the side of virtue and religion, even evoked an apostrophe from Lord Byron in his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers."

"Why slumbers Gifford? once was asked in vain,
Why slumbers Gifford? let me ask again;
Are there no follies for his pen to purge?
Are there no fools whose backs deserve his scourge?
Are there no sins for Satire's Bard to greet?
Stalks not gigantic vice in every street?
Arouse thee, Gifford! Be thy province claimed,
Make bad men better, or, at least, ashamed."

Gifford never married, but the tenderness and elegance of his nature are—shall we not say *immortalised* by his epitaph on one who was for more than twenty years his housekeeper and servant? We venture to think the verses show the real heart of the noble shoemaker even beyond any of his greater performances. We wonder if they are obliterated from the tombstone on which they were placed, in the burying-ground of Grosvenor Chapel, South Audley Street?

"To the Memory of Ann Davis.

"Though here unknown, dear Ann, thy ashes rest,
Still lives thy memory in one grateful breast,
That traced thy course through many a painful year,
And marked thy humble hope,—thy pious fear.
Oh, when this frame, which yet, while life remained,
Thy duteous love with trembling hand sustained,
Dissolves (as soon it must), may that blest Power
Who beamed on *thine*, illumine *my* parting hour!
So shall I greet thee where no ills annoy,
And what was sown in grief is reaped in joy,
Where worth, obscured below, bursts into day,
And those are paid whom earth can never pay!"

And so we are among the poets. And in this connection the shoemakers boast more names than we can dream of doing justice to. There are the two Bloomfields, Nathaniel and Robert, especially Robert, who, although principally known by his delineations of rural scenery, and fields, and farm-house life, was a shoemaker. Few epigrams are more happy than that in which Henry Kirke White celebrates the fame of Robert.

"Bloomfield, thy happy omen'd name
Ensures continuance to thy fame;
Both sense and truth this verdict give,
While fields shall bloom, thy name shall live!"

But there are many names not unworthy of mention—the children of the stall—who have not attained to the notoriety of their more eminent brethren. We have two volumes bearing the name of Joseph Blackett, born at Tunstall, near Richmond, in Yorkshire, where his father was a day labourer. At eleven years of age he was sent to London to be bound apprentice to his brother, who was a ladies' shoemaker. Joseph Blackett died young. Miss

Millbank, afterwards Lady Byron, seems to have greatly admired him. She erected a monument over his grave, with an inscription from one of his own poems.

"Shut from the light, 'mid awful gloom,
Let clay-cold honour rest in state;
And from the decorated tomb
Receive the tribute of the great.
Let me, when bade with life to part,
And in my narrow mansion sleep,
Receive a tribute from the heart,
Nor bribe one sordid eye to weep."

John Bennett was a shoemaker, and also parish clerk of Woodstock. We have seen some volumes of fugitive verses published by him in 1774. He was no poet, but perhaps had a happy facility for rhyming, and possibly enough of genius to secure for him the friendship of Thomas Warton, to whom his first volume was dedicated, and which, judging from the number of countesses and earls, and such persons of distinction—most likely obtained by Warton—among his subscribers, must have been of some profit to him. He was probably a deserving man, and his motives for publication appear to have been amiable, although his celebration of such subjects as "Bowley's Ale," and his "Lines to the Rose and Crown," do not belong to the fittest order of subjects; but then, as some extenuation, we may remember that Ben Jonson celebrated in verse the "Nights with Shakespeare at the Mermaid." However, it is probable that John Bennett would not have received any notice from us in this paper but for his celebration of shoemakers in verse. In his first volume he vindicates his rhyme thus:—

"A shoemaker, d'ye say?
I do: what then?
A shoemaker and a poet?

True again.
Where's the wonder? if you look around
You'll find some poets—cobblers most profound!
With borrowed thesis, versify and patch it,
And spoil both upper leather, sole, and latchet;
By which 'tis so transform'd, so different grown,
That th' owner does not know it for his own.
A shoemaker and a poet?

Good again.
Aren't shoemakers the same as other men?
No doubt; but men are born of different cast,
'Let not the cobbler go beyond his last!
Lest, like that critic who to fame aspired,
He lose the honours which he has acquired;
For while he criticised upon the shoe,
He gained applause, as learned critics do;
But when he took upon him to impart
His curious observations on the art
Th' ingenious statuary had display'd
Where all but life and motion was essay'd,
No wonder why the well-known censure past,
'Let not the cobbler go beyond his last.'
But will much learning make dull blockheads wise?
Poets are often cobblers in disguise,
And give the world such patches of each other,
That Dulness nods to Dulness, 'Thou'rt my brother';
Yet claim connection with Apollo's court,
As if th' inspiring Graces there resort."

And surely we must not forget, while we are recalling to our memory the names of those illustrious shoemakers who have done something significant in

our literature, that of Thomas Olivers, the famous Welsh cobbler, the friend of John Wesley, and one of the choir of singing apostles in the early days of the great Methodist movement. He is the author of that most magnificent hymn, of which James Montgomery says, "There is not in our language a lyric of more majestic style, more elevated thought, or more glowing imagery":—

"The God of Abram praise,
Who reigns enthroned above;
Ancient of everlasting days,
And God of Love!"

In fact, of this great hymn it has been very truly said that it is such a Hebrew melody as leaves the efforts of Sir Walter Scott and Lord Byron far behind. Mr. Christophers, in his interesting book on "Hymn Writers," says: In the course of conversation a few years ago, the son of an old minister said, "I remember my father telling me that he was once standing in the aisle of City Road Chapel during a conference in Wesley's time, when Thomas Olivers came down to him, and, unfolding a manuscript, said, 'Look at this; I have rendered it from the Hebrew, giving it, as far as I could, a Christian character, and I have called upon Leoni, the Jew, who has given to me a synagogue melody to suit it; here is the tune, and it is to be called *Leoni*.'" This is the first we hear of the famous hymn. Another well-known hymn has been attributed to Olivers;—

"Lo! He comes, with clouds descending!"

There can be no doubt that Charles Wesley caught the sentiment and inspiration of that hymn from the long poem of Thomas Olivers in which that line actually occurs; but, probably, the more natural cause of the association of the inspired shoemaker's name with the hymn arises from the fact that he was the author of that plaintive tune called "Helmsley," to which it is usually sung. Master at once of the rhythm of verse and the notes of song, an indefatigable and useful preacher, and a stout controversialist, Thomas Olivers was indeed one of the order of wonderful shoemakers, and his life is one of the astonishing romances of religious biography.

III.

SINGULAR pieces of heraldry have been adopted in great popular movements and revolutions, but one of the most singular was that in the dark ages, in one of the great revolts of the very lowly and poor in Germany—the "Bundschuh, or the Clouted Shoon." The story is one of the most romantic; it was the pathetic insignia of the shoeless, or the down-trodden hosts in those wild forests in those far-off times; it became quite a mark and sign of terror beneath the leadership of Joss Fritz. There was great difficulty even in getting it painted—but it was painted, and on silk—a peasant kneeling before the cross, with the sign of the clouted shoon, and the inscription, "Oh Lord, assist the righteous!" And concerning that epithet, "The Clouted Shoon," or, to quote its Scriptural expression, "Old shoes and clouted," a number of stories rise to the memory, the mention of which we will omit here, only putting together the two significant texts—that while the progress of the people through the wilderness is summed up in that suggestive description of the weariness of the way, that they went with "old shoes and clouted," the promise to the believer is in that fine one, "Thy shoes shall be as iron and brass."

Very different is it, however, in these days, when science is brought to bear upon the shoe. We have before us a most singular book on "The Foot and its Covering," comprising a full translation of Dr. Camper's work on "The Best Form of Shoe." It is by a learned shoemaker, one James Dowie; a study of the human foot and its covering from a shoemaker's point of view, who adopts as his text, with a slight variation, an old Latin proverb, "*Ridendo calceos corrigit*" ("Jesting, to improve your footgear, I intend.")

The great John Locke did not disdain to devote some portion of his attention even to this department of "the human understanding," and gave certain directions as to the kind of shoes most fitted to secure the health of children; but Mr. Dowie goes into the business at once with the delicacy of an anatomist and the enthusiasm of a patriot, and discusses again from a shoemaker's point of view the importance of attending to the foot covering of our soldiers as one of the grand means by which we may maintain a proper military standing among the nations. He quotes Sir George Ballingall, lecturer on military surgery in the Edinburgh University, who said that "it was much to be regretted that the medical officers of the army were not consulted respecting the soldiers' clothing and boots, the greater part of which is ill-adapted to the soldiers' requirements—especially his boots." And Mr. Dowie says: "General Sir Thomas Wiltshire told me he lost a considerable number of his men in the Affghan war by their becoming footsore, and consequently unable to keep up with the main body, when the enemy from the heights picked them off with the greatest ease; and this lameness and its consequences he attributes to the rigid-soled regulation boots of the public service." Mr. Dowie is strong in this matter also against the wicked encroachments of fashion. We must quote from him one little characteristic paragraph:—"Fashion may have her votaries and her influence, but the age in which we live is daily becoming more and more utilitarian in character, and there cannot be a doubt but the present system, if system it can be called, of sacrificing the usefulness of the human foot is doomed, and that even fashion herself, in spite of all the prejudices of the past, is about to pack up her old traps with a view to starting afresh on sounder principles in the shoeing of man." Mr. Dowie's book was written in 1861, and therefore he did not see what modern fashion is capable of in the restoration of Louis Quinze boots, with their ridiculous high heels, to the feet of our ladies. "There is an old toast," continues Mr. Dowie, "with which all are, no doubt, familiar—

"Here's to our friends! As for our foes,
May they have short shoes, and corns on their toes!"

The plain English of which is embodied in what a prime minister once told me, in reply to something that fell from my lips, perhaps too much in favour of St. Crispin. 'Shoemakers should be all treated like pirates—put to death without trial or mercy, as they had inflicted more suffering on mankind than any class he knew.' The above nobleman (it was Lord Palmerston, who was a great patron of Mr. Dowie's) is well known for the precision with which he hits the nail on the head; and, however reluctantly we may say it, there can be no doubt but a hobnail is here driven into St. Crispin's heel that must be removed before he can stand at ease."

Although Lord Palmerston may not literally have dealt with bad shoemakers in the grim manner suggested in this conversation with Mr. Dowie, there are many instances in which those capable of venting their wrath in a severe kind of punishment have not hesitated to do so. There is a story of Don Carlos, the son of the infamous and brutal Philip II of Spain, how on one occasion his bootmaker, having brought him home a pair of boots which were too small, by the prince's order they were cut in pieces, cooked, and forced down the unhappy wretch's throat, to the imminent risk of his life. This don was a descendant of that shoemaker of Veyros whose story we told in the first paper. Of Dr. Francia, the terrible Dictator of Paraguay, it is told, that when a shoemaker did a singularly bad piece of work, he delivered him over to a soldier to be trotted for an hour underneath the gallows, with the assurance that the next time he did so bad a piece of work he should figure, not beneath but upon that unpleasant stage.

And while we are upon this half droll and half utilitarian line of remark, we are reminded of a paper, which would have suited Mr. Dowie's taste well, in an old volume of the "London Magazine and Review" for 1825, entitled, "The Street Companion; or, The Young Man's Guide and the Old Man's Comfort in the Choice of Shoes." We presume, from the satiric tone of the whole paper, that it is in mere satire its author says: "The glorious conqueror of Waterloo has also deigned to exhibit to me (it was in his own dressing-room—awful moment!) the first specimen of that admirable invention, which is due to his Grace's ingenuity, the high, or top shoe, commonly called the Wellington boot. The classical nature of his Grace's mind is as apparent in this circumstance as in his victories. The Wellington boot, re-invented by the hero of Waterloo, was a favourite winter shoe of the Roman rustic; and Juvenal's words are as applicable to the nineteenth century as to the first: *Quem non pudet alto per glaciem perone tegi*—He will not do anything forbidden who is not ashamed, through ice, to wear a rustic top-boot; for the *perone*, says Ainsworth, was a sort of high shoe, or boot, made of raw leather, worn by country people as a defence against snow and cold." Whether the Iron Duke's knowledge of the classics was so great as is implied in this cunning quotation of the satirist, may be doubted, but there can be no doubt of the happiness of the quotation.

WEATHER PROVERBS.

February.

THOUGH not the wettest month in the year, February is usually marked by falls of snow or rain, and has well earned the title of "fill dyke" given it by Tusser. In old times it was considered more desirable to see snow than rain during this month, and fine weather was held to be most prejudicial.

"February fill dyke, be it black or be it white,
But if it be white it's the better to like."

"If February give much snow,
A fine summer it doth foreshow."

"The Welshman had rather see his dam on the bier,
Than to see a fair Februer."

"All the months in the year
Curse a fair Februer."

"When guats dance in February the husbandman becomes
a beggar."

The proverbs relating to special days in this month are particularly numerous, showing the great importance attached in bygone days to the weather of the early part of the year. February 3rd, which answers to January 22nd o.s., St. Vincent's Day, is the first day of which we have to take notice:—

"Remember on St. Vincent's Day,
If that the sun his beams display,
Be sure to mark his transient beam,
Which through the casement sheds a gleam;
For 'tis a token bright and clear
Of prosperous weather all the year."

The same characteristic of sunshine should mark the 6th, which is "old" St. Paul's Day:—

"If Saint Paul's Day be faire and cleare
It doth betide a happy yeare,
But if by chance it then should rain,
It will make deare all kinds of graine;
And if ye clouds make dark ye skie,
Then neate and fowles this year shall die;
If blustering winds do blow aloft,
Then wars shall trouble ye realm full oft."

Two passages in prose from Willsford's "Nature's Secrets" and the "Shepherd's Almanack" of 1676 prognosticate the same, but as they are simply paraphrases of the lines above, it is useless quoting them. As St. Vincent's Day and St. Paul's Day belonged to January in every way in the old style, these proverbs do not really contradict those which look for wet in February. The amount of weather wisdom which gathers round Candlemas Day [February 14th, n.s.] is surprising, there being more proverbs relating to that day than to any other in the whole year. If this day enjoys bright and sunny weather, winter will continue for a long time: the stormier the day the better for the farmer:—

"Foul weather is no news;
Hail, rain, and snow,
Are now expected, and
Esteemed no woe.
Nay, 'tis an omen bad,
The yeomen say,
If Phoebus shows his face
The second [14th] day."

—County Almanack, 1676.

"If Candlemas Day be fair and clear,
There'll be two winters in the year."

"As far as the sun shines in on Candlemas Day
So far the snow will blow in afore old May."

"The hind had as lief see his wife on the bier,
As that Candlemas Day should be pleasant and clear."

"When Candlemas Day is come and gone,
The snow lies on a hot stone."

In Aberdeenshire and the North of Scotland the rhyme is:—

"If Candlemas Day be dry and fair,
The half of the winter's to come and mair.
If Candlemas Day be wet and foul,
The half of the winter is gone at Yule."

"If Candlemas Day be fair and bright,
Winter will have another flight;
But if Candlemas Day bring clouds and rain,
Winter is gone and won't come again."

"After Candlemas Day the frost will be more keen,
If the sun then shines bright, than before it has been."

"When the wind's in the east on Candlemas Day,
There it will stick till the second of May."

There are several other sayings to the same purpose, but to quote all would take up too much space. It will be sufficient to point out that the experience of the French agrees with our own, for they say—

"A la Chandelur,
Grand froid, grand neige!
S'il fait beau l'ours sort de sa tanière,
Fait trois tours,
Et rentre pour quarante jours."

And the Germans attribute similar sagacity to the badger. Proverbs connected with moveable days are clearly the result of superstition, and cannot possibly possess any practical value. Still, it may be well to note them, if for mere curiosity; and as Shrove Tuesday falls this year on the last day of February, two proverbs connected with it will be a fitting conclusion to the list for February:—

"Thunder on Shrove Tuesday foretelleth wind, store of fruit, and plenty."

"So much as the sun shines on Shrove Tuesday, the like will shine on every day in Lent."

In the "Shepherd's Almanack" for 1676 we find the following: "Some say thunder on Shrove Tuesday foretelleth wind, store of fruit, and plenty. Others affirm that so much as the sun shineth that day, the like will shine every day in Lent." The author, too, of the "Book of Knowledge," 1703, says: "On Shrove Tuesday, whosoever doth plant or sow, it shall remain always green." And Brand, quoting from a ms. miscellany, dated 1691, says that if the wind blows on this night, it betokens "a death amongst them that are learned, and much fish shall die in the following summer."

Varieties.

O'BRIEN, THE GIANT.—I have been reading the account of the great giant O'Brien, and the discussion as to whether the bones of this huge man rest peacefully in his grave, or are standing in the attitude of Mr. Pitt in the Hunterian Museum. Five-and-thirty years ago I was pupil to Mr. Richard Smith, the senior surgeon of the Bristol Infirmary. Mr. Smith at that time was the oldest hospital surgeon in England, and by long marks the merriest, and during his long tenure of office (fifty years, I think) had collected the finest provincial pathological museum in the country, and he is still well remembered in his native town as a skilful surgeon, anatomist, antiquary, and local historian. Mr. Smith knew Patrick Collier O'Brien well, and not long before he died, about the year 1843, he told me the following story. I will give it you as nearly as I can in Mr. Smith's own words:—"They tell you in London that they have

got the skeleton of O'Brien in the College Museum, but they have not. They have got O'Byrne, a smaller man. Why, O'Brien was 8ft. 2in. If anybody could have got out his body it would have been myself. He was buried, sir, in the porch of the Roman Catholic Church in Trenchard Street. He had a great horror of being dissected, but I was determined to have him, and took a house (or intended to take a house) on the other side of the street, that we might dig a tunnel under the road, and remove him quietly. But we found he was buried in a grave sunk deep in the red rock, and the stone over him secured by strong iron bars, so that we could not run a mine to him without blasting with gunpowder, so we gave the plan up. And there he lies; and if anybody ever tells you that they have got him in London, you tell them that he would have been in Richard Smith's museum if in any museum at all." He also told me the early history of O'Brien, stating that a gentleman had seen a great raw youth blubbering in a public-house, which he could not leave, as he had not the means of paying his score; that he learned that the youth had arrived from Ireland to be exhibited as a giant, had quarrelled with his exhibitor, and was left penniless; that the gentleman took compassion on him, paid his debts, persuaded him to set up on his own account; that he did so in the public-house in Temple Street, long known afterwards by the sign, the Giant's Castle; that when he retired from public life he proved himself a quiet, simple, inoffensive man, as all over-big fellows are; that he used to walk about in the evenings when the darkness favoured his escape from notice; that he went almost nightly to the theatre, when he sat in the farthest back row in the boxes. The Giant's Castle I well remember; it is pulled down now, as everything else interesting in dear, dirty old Bristol has been pulled down to make room for improvements. The days I refer to were the old days when the study of anatomy was followed up by stealth in more ways than one, and the pickaxe and shovel were as much a part of an enterprising medical student's instrument list as his box of scalpels. Body-snatching was then, too, frequent, and Mr. Smith, in his young days, had the honour of being fired at by a militiaman from a barrack window overlooking a churchyard, under the impression that he was a ghost hovering over a newly-made grave. So the idea of driving an "adit" under a street road to get at a body would not have been thought so outrageous a thing then as it would be now. Moreover, all collectors have been, are now, and ever will be, thieves (make a note of this, please), and if it had been practicable at any price, Patrick Collier O'Brien would be now standing erect in the museum of that most cheery, kind-hearted surgeon and determined collector, Richard Smith. — *George Pycroft, in "Land and Water."*

GLADSTONE OUT OF OFFICE.—The following, written by Professor Blackie, appeared in the "Scotsman":—

"TO THE RT. HON. W. E. GLADSTONE OUT OF OFFICE.

"As when a steed that nobly won the race
Retires, and wisely soothes his smoking flanks,
So thou didst step from high-commanding place,
Well pleased to hide thy laurels in the ranks.
But not thy rest is deedless, nor thine ear
Lies lazy on a languid-rotting tide;
And, for thy hand is bound, thy thought the more
Shoots high and low, and ranges far and wide.
Not of one thread thy web; rich Nature made
Thy substance up of most contrasted things,
Prepared, as need might be, for either trade,
To preach with prophets or to rule with kings;
Even as she rears sometimes a growth of power,
That is both hardy tree and dainty flower."

SHIPS AT SEA.—A correspondent of the "Times" gives some useful hints as to safety of passengers as well as security of property. Fires at sea are not unfrequently caused by the sailors "broaching the cargo."—"I can speak practically on the subject, having had upwards of twenty-four years' experience as a commander of sailing vessels of various sizes, from 500 to 1,100 tons, during which period I several times conveyed emigrants to the Australian colonies (fortunately without accident), the first occasion being in the year 1840. I am also interested in the matter, from being now an underwriter at Lloyd's, and connected with shipping both as an owner and as a merchant. In ships carrying cargo only, the source of mischief complained of might easily be prevented if the captain and officers simply did their duty. Accidents by fire to such ships are usually caused by the igniting of some combustible material taken on board without the knowledge of the officers. This could not easily be done if the chief officer himself were to

uperintend the taking in of the cargo, keeping account of everything put on board, while the second officer looked after the stowing, as was the custom some time ago. Instead of this, the plan now in vogue is for the broker to send a clerk to take in the cargo, while a stevedore and men hired by him are employed to stow it; the consequence of which is that in nine cases out of ten the chief or second officer scarcely knows what is in the ship, or where any particular article is stowed. It is often the case that on the arrival of these vessels at their destinations the cargo is found to have been plundered, and the robbery is as often committed by the stevedore's men or by the lightermen as by the crew. In ships carrying passengers (but not under the Act), and especially where they are berthed below, it is almost impossible to prevent plunder if either the seamen or the passengers are so inclined. Stores are generally served out from the hold, and seamen or passengers are employed to break out and serve them; hence they soon discover where spirits, beer, etc., are stowed, and quickly find an opportunity for plundering. In the case of emigrant ships, however, where so many lives are at stake, the Governments importing the emigrants might, if they chose, have the matter entirely under their control by stipulating with the owners of the ships employed that no spirits or liquors of any sort, eatables, oil, pitch, tar, resin, or other combustible articles, should be taken on freight. The Governments would, no doubt, with such terms, have to pay considerably more per head for the conveyance of each emigrant, but by this means the chance of accidents by fire would be lessened in no small degree. A great deal depends, also, upon the vigilance of the officers. If, instead of going their rounds of inspection at stated known times, they were to turn up now and again when least expected, passengers inclined to break through rules would be more afraid of being caught, and, therefore, less likely to commit such misdemeanours as have been spoken of. By adopting the plan mentioned of looking in upon them unawares, I have more than once found men smoking in bed, and the severest punishment I was allowed to inflict for such a dangerous breach of discipline was to stop a part of their rations, a regulation upon which the authorities on shore looked with some jealousy. I am afraid I have already trespassed too much on your valuable space, but I would remark, in conclusion, that, in my opinion, legislation is very much wanted for our seamen as well as for our ships. At present, out of a crew of, say, sixteen A.B.'s, not one-third of them could be trusted to heave the lead, while many would be found unfit to steer."

MR. MOODY'S BIBLE.—This is an interesting book. It was given to him by a friend, and bears on the fly-leaf the words—"D. L. Moody. Dublin, December, 1872. 'God is love.' W. Ray." The Bible is an 8vo volume, with flexible back, morocco covers, and turned edges. Though given to Mr. Moody in the last month of 1872, it appears as if it might have seen ten years' service. Some of the leaves are worn through with handling, but nearly every page gives another and more positive proof of the study Mr. Moody has given the book. In the Old Testament many portions are annotated on nearly every page. Especially is this true of those parts treating of the history of the Israelites, the chosen people of God. But in the New Testament, open the book wherever one may, the pages are marked and annotated in black, red, and blue ink to a wonderful extent. Sometimes certain words are underscored; again a whole verse is enclosed in black lines, with mysterious numbers or a single letter of the alphabet marked opposite; all around the margins and at the chapter heads are comments on certain passages—an idea embodied in two or three words, with the more important word underscored. Turning to the texts of the sermons Mr. Moody has preached in Brooklyn, one finds the burden of his theme often embodied in one of these marginal notes. There is scarcely a page in the New Testament where a dozen such annotations could not be counted; while in some instances every space in the margin is filled, and hardly a sentence has escaped the evangelist's pen.—*New York Tribune.*

HEATHEN CHILDREN IN ENGLAND.—The neglected condition of many of the young in towns—"City Arabs," as they are called—has been much discussed, and largely remedied. But it appears from the letter of "A West Country Parson" in the "Times" that children in agricultural districts are often equally neglected—"While engaged in parochial visiting I happened to meet a boy, aged eleven years, who is working for a respectable farmer in my parish. To this boy, in the course of conversation, I put the following questions, and from him received these startling replies:—Have you ever been to school?—No. Can you read or write?—No. Have you ever been to a place of worship?—No. Do you ever say any prayers?—No. Do

you know who Jesus Christ was?—No. Have you ever heard of God?—No. Do you know what would become of you after death?—No. Have you a father and mother?—Yes. Do they ever go to a place of worship?—No. What do you do on Sundays?—Look after the cattle and such like. Now, here was a boy, bright and intelligent-looking, and, as I heard, of a thoroughly good disposition, whose mind with respect to mental and spiritual knowledge is absolutely a blank. Of any moral obligation he knows nothing. He eats and drinks, and looks after the cattle and such like, and is 'happy as a sandboy'; and yet when questioned he expressed a desire to know something of those things on which I had been speaking to him. You would call the boy a heathen. Poor little fellow, he is worse than a heathen. Heathens worship something, and know something; he neither knows nor worships anything. Let it be observed that this boy being under twelve years of age, the farmer who employs him in agricultural labour is knowingly breaking the law day after day, and who is to stop him? He snaps his fingers at the Act of Parliament, for he knows perfectly well that there is nobody in the parish who dares inform against him. His landlord will not trouble him; and as for the parson, he had better not meddle; and I do not think the parson had better meddle, for should I do so I should at once make a bitter enemy of every farmer in the parish, including the squire; and thus any influence for good I may at present have with them would at once be nullified and turned into violent opposition. In the meanwhile, this boy and others like him are to be allowed to grow up in the state of brutish ignorance I have described—and why? Because having an Act of Parliament framed expressly for remedying evils of this kind, there is no machinery whatever for putting it in force. I may remark that my parish is not by any means an out-of-the-way parish. The boy works within a mile of the parish church at which his master generally attends, and within two miles of a thriving seaport town. Moreover, all around him are school boards in full vigour of life, but none of which are able to touch cases of this kind, for we have no compulsory powers of attendance, nor have we any paid inspectors to see that the Agricultural Children Act is carried out."

FLOODS IN THE THAMES VALLEY.—At the time of the great floods of last November Mr. Robert Rawlinson, C.E., gave advice, which will be too probably neglected till the next disastrous floods come. We reprint a portion of his letter. The warning may be needed at any season of the year. In 1874 the greatest damage was done by the high tides of March. "There is probably more wealth on the banks of the Thames than on any other river in the world (and compared with some it is a mere rivulet), but look at the present state of the Thames—through past and continued neglect, it is now, when flooded, one vast pestiferous swamp. In Holland and in our Fen districts the inhabitants prevent flooding and even keep out the seas. The estuary of the Thames has been embanked from a time prehistoric, and yet the upper and richer portions of the valley are allowed to be disgracefully flooded. The river has at last been embanked through the metropolis. The valley above will no doubt some day also be dealt with. We are told by those who do not understand the question that floods are more common and more violent now than formerly—that land draining shoots the surface water down more rapidly. Land drains do nothing of the sort; but, if anything, for a time retard the discharge of flood water, just in proportion as the drained land absorbs the first rain. Floods are the effect of continuous rain—so continued that water flows off water, and the undrained surfaces and the drained surfaces then act alike—the subsoil must be saturated up to the surface, so that the continued heavy rain must flow down to choke the neglected and abused rivers and flood the valleys. 'Make reservoirs' is advice in one form. Make reservoirs, certainly, so far as may be necessary for domestic uses and for trade purposes; but making reservoirs will go a short way to preventing damage from rain-storm river floods. To prevent flooding there must be a free course provided for all excessive falls of rain, or mischief will ensue. A stream which is apparently dried up for months in a year can, in a few days, become a roaring and destructive torrent. And every great impounding reservoir has, in proportion to its gathering ground, a flood-water channel or by-wash. The several tablelands of England require arterial draining; the main lines of rivers also require to have their beds deepened, impediments removed, and their bordering alluvial flats embanked. The water which covers the swamped areas on each side of the Thames above London is only a fractional part of the flood volume, and in many cases very moderate embanking would prevent this disgraceful and unwholesome flooding."

THICK
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warm
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No